

Kaldor's 'The Military in Development' – A Comment

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Mary Kaldor's article is a *tour de force* in its attempt to explore 'The military in development' (*World Development*, June 1976). She implies that a fresh approach is necessary since those of modernization theorists and Marxists¹ 'both fail to explain the differences in the behaviour of military institutions in Third World countries'. The former, in Kaldor's view, 'have explained the military's political tendencies by reference to inherent institutional characteristics sometimes making confusing use of the term 'class', and they have explained the military's economic impact in terms of direct absorption or mobilization of resources'. Marxists, in contrast, 'have treated the military as a more or less neutral instrument of the ruling class and looked at the economic impact of the military in terms of its role in preserving a social system characterized by a particular allocation of resources'. According to Kaldor, 'very little has been written about the role of the military in the process of historical change from a Marxist perspective'. She sets out to reconstruct Marxist theory, therefore, from a limited number of sources: Karl Liebknecht's *Militarism and Anti-Militarism*; Engels' *Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State* (from which she quotes a single line to illustrate Engels' technological determinism); Marx's *Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*; and recent papers by a Marxist study collective in Hamburg, which see the role of the military in the world-wide allocation of resources 'as a mechanism for extracting surplus product in the periphery in order to support capitalist accumulation in the metropolis'.

Kaldor ignores a considerable amount of additional material, particularly by Engels, which ought not to be neglected in setting out the classical Marxist position. Three chapters in *Anti-Duhring* entitled 'The force theory' and an unfinished study which applies this theory to Bismarck's policy of 'Blood and Iron', entitled *The Role of Force in History* (first translated

into English in 1968) are directly concerned with the application of force in the course of economic development. A brief summary of these and other works, as well as some of Marx and Engels correspondence, will suggest why Marxists have treated the military 'as a more or less neutral institution of the ruling class'. Kaldor's objections to such a treatment appear to be misinformed. Her rendering of the Marxist position suffers as a consequence. So, too, does her attempt at what appears to be an arbitration of the Marxist and 'modernization' positions. When it becomes clearer why Marxists have treated the military as a neutral instrument of the ruling class it becomes clearer why the Marxist approach may best facilitate theorizing about the military in development.

Kaldor is also concerned with the role of the military in the allocation of resources and with the impact of Western-type weapons systems in underdeveloped countries. Our comments on this theme question both her conclusion of a 'strong association' between high military spending and high rates of industrial growth in light of the evidence, and how great a positive impact on industrialization the permanent arms economy might reasonably be expected to have.

I

Engels sets out in the first chapter of 'The force theory' to disprove 'that all economic phenomena must be explained by political causes, that is, by force', which is Duhring's contention:

In calling property as it exists today property founded on force . . . Herr Duhring is . . . making the whole relationship stand on its head . . .²

What Engels argues for in *Anti-Duhring* is the need to see force not as determining history, however fascinating and all-powerful force may appear but as flowing out of the unity of class

and productive relations. Thus, all class-divided societies are not founded on force *per se*, although they are reinforced by it. Rather, a class's hegemony is grounded in more fundamental phenomena. According to Engels, in the historical epoch characterized by the rise of the bourgeoisie:

... the decisive weapon of the burghers in this struggle was their *economic* power, constantly increasing through the development first of handicraft industry, ... later manufacturing industry, and through the extension of commerce. During the whole of this struggle political force was on the side of the nobility. ...

And ultimately:

... when the bourgeoisie ... make their appeal to force in order to save the collapsing 'economic order' from the final crash, by so doing they only show that they are caught in the same illusion as Herr Duhring: the illusion that 'political conditions are the decisive cause of the economic order'; they show that they imagine, just as Herr Duhring does, that by making use of the 'primitive phenomenon', 'direct political force', they can remodel those 'facts of the second order', of the economic order and its inevitable development. (My emphasis.)

For Engels, of course, the economic order is primary and force is secondary.

After treating force explicitly in his analysis in its more concrete form – the ruling class – Engels treats force in its political form – the state – which is distinct from the ruling class under the capitalist mode of production. This allows Engels to arrive at his conclusion about the relationship between force and economic development:

The role played in history by force as contrasted with economic development is now clear. In the first place, all political power is originally based on an economic, social function. ... Secondly, after the political force has made itself independent in relation to society ... it can work in two different directions. *Either it works in the sense and in the direction of the regular economic development* in which case no conflict arises between them, the economic development being accelerated. *Or, force works against economic development*; in this case, as a rule, but with few exceptions, force succumbs to it. ... [W]here – apart from cases of conquest – the internal public force of a country stands in opposition to its economic development, as at a certain stage has occurred with almost every political power in the past, the conquest has always ended with the downfall of the economic power. Inexorably and without exception the economic evolution has forced its way through. ... (My emphasis.)

This passage summarizes Engels' theory about the relation of force to economic

development. To flesh out the bones of this summary, however, it is necessary to return briefly to the relation of the ruling class to the state. Engels' schematic theory of the state appears in *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State*. It posits that the state is subordinate to the most powerful economic interests, just as force in its most abstract form is subordinate to the economic order:

As the state arose from the need to keep class antagonisms in check, but also arose in the thick of the fight between the classes, it is normally the state of the most powerful, economically ruling class, which by its means becomes also the politically ruling class. ... Exceptional periods, however, occur when the warring classes are so nearly equal in forces that the state power, as *apparent* mediator, *acquires for the moment a certain independence in relation to both*. (My emphasis.)³

What is alluded to here is expanded on by Marx in his *Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*. Even in 'exceptional periods' the autonomy of states, which have seemingly developed beyond the direct control of any one class, is relative rather than absolute; momentary rather than timeless. The power which the state exercises over the economy may differ from, or exceed, what the calculated needs of the economically hegemonic classes would have led them to prefer. But such differences and excesses occur only within limits. For states fall under siege by starving peasants and proletarians when, in defiance of state authority, farmers do not sow and factory owners do not reinvest. Statesmen are felled for want of tax revenues to pay their soldiers. Should the excesses of states include such indiscretions as the *indiscriminate* appropriation of private property (i.e. nationalizations beyond what are necessary to raise the rate of profit in the private sector), either counter coups, the rise of private armies, or revolutions *cum* civil wars come on the agenda. The distinction between direct and indirect rule under Bismarck is drawn by Engels in a letter to Marx dated 1866:

... It is becoming ever clearer to me that the bourgeoisie has not the stuff in it for ruling directly itself, and that therefore ... a Bonapartist semi-dictatorship is the normal form. It upholds the big material interests of the bourgeoisie even against the will of the bourgeoisie, but allows the bourgeoisie no share in the power of government. The dictatorship in its turn is forced against its will to adopt these material interests of the bourgeoisie as its own.⁴

The similarity with the Third World today is striking. There, a weak local bourgeoisie is unable to develop the productive forces alone,

relies on the military and stronger capitals provided by the imperialist powers, and is forever looking over its shoulder at the masses who are threatening its position.

At the very least, Marxist analysis suggests that a theory of the state is essential to avoid the fetishism of force: a confusion of the superficial power of tanks and Tommy guns with the true power of the military to effect economic change. Without a theory of the state, the view of the process of economic change which is attained through the prism of the military will be myopic at best and misleading at worst. Marxist theory also suggests the limitations of the independent influence over economic affairs of standing armies (which Marx considers as one of the 'ubiquitous organs of centralized state power, along with the police, bureaucracy, clergy and judicature').⁵ Armies may possess direct say-so over the choice of weapons and the size of the military budget. But when an army formally assumes state power, decisions about the allocation and distribution of resources ultimately rest with the *economically* mighty. The propertied Estates do not vanish after the palace troops rebel. It is for this reason that the military is a 'neutral' institution of the ruling class (which is itself, of course, never neutral).

At a technical level, it is also highly questionable whether the military can govern. For the army, *qua* army as an hierarchical institution, concerned with drills and dress and the deployment of force, is congenitally unsuited to decide on matters of taxes, tariffs and trade. Where army men specialize in such matters, they cease to be army men in the conventional sense of the term. Franco's Spain represents a case where a capable military dictator actually governed. But even so, the army under Franco was slowly but drastically reduced in size and scope after the Civil War.⁶ Franco secured his domination by juggling ruling class fraternities such as the Opus Dei, which made decisions on the allocation of resources and the distribution of the surplus.⁷ The same waning of the army (and waxing of the bourgeoisie) is apparent in Chiang Kai-shek's Taiwan. The army may set the rules of the game by which politicians are permitted to play (as in Brazil, Argentina and so many other Third World countries), but the fact remains that it is rather difficult to industrialize by the gun. In Engels' words: 'Force . . . cannot make any money; at most it can only take away money that has already been made – and even this does not help very much'.⁸

Kaldor does not have any self-conscious

theory of the state in her analysis of the military in development. Her summary of Marx's theory of the state, as expounded in the *Eighteenth Brumaire*, is left suspended in space, unincorporated into the rest of her analysis. Kaldor informs us neither of the constraints on the power of armies to influence industrialization nor of the sources of their power. We are only told that:

... common to all societies . . . is the role of the military as organized force. The use of this force whether explicitly in war or implicitly through political intervention, can *determine* the balance of power, the complexion of government and the prevailing social and economic conditions. (My emphasis)

In believing that force can *determine* all this, surely Kaldor is caught in the same illusion as Herr Duhring: 'the illusion that "political conditions are the decisive cause of the economic order"'.⁹

Kaldor quotes Engels as saying: ' . . . the producer of more perfect tools, *vulgo* arms, beats the producer of more imperfect ones'.⁹ She then goes on to argue:

In this there is a strong element of technological determinism. Military organization is also important. . . .

The emphasis [attributed by Kaldor to Engels] on techniques as opposed to organization implies that the army is more or less a neutral instrument of the ruling class. [?] . . . On such assumptions [of Engels], the main interest of a study of militarism is exposure of the brutality of the ruling class. The possibility of political manoeuvre by the army is not excluded but it is not susceptible to abstract analysis.

Had Kaldor been more familiar with Engels' works, her views on his technological determinism might have been otherwise. A passage in Engels' 'Force theory' reads as follows:

Nothing is more dependent on economic preconditions than *precisely* the army and navy. Their armaments, composition, organization, tactics and strategy depend on above all the stage reached at the time in production and communications. (My emphasis.)

And later:

... the whole organization and method of fighting of armies, and along with these victory or defeat, proves to be dependent on material, that is, economic conditions; on the human material, and the armaments material, and therefore on the quality and quantity of the population and on technical development.¹⁰

Kaldor misses the whole point in supposing that for Marxists, the neutrality of armies has a

technical basis. Marxists see in the military a neutral instrument of the ruling class precisely because force is subordinate to the economic order and the instruments of force are subordinate to the mode of production.

The military falcon has repeatedly flown away from the falconer in countless underdeveloped countries in recent years, as Kaldor has stressed. The antics of army coups in small Third World countries with names like 'typographical error[s]' hardly let Mr. George Ball get a full night's rest in the 1960s.¹¹ An epidemic of coups, which is stimulated by class conflict and economic chaos, has sometimes simply resulted in a reshuffling of state personnel and little else. Sometimes a rotation of coups has spelled the ascendance of one ruling class faction over another. Some independent initiatives of the military, however, have been especially intriguing because they have appeared to signal a 'turn to the Left' e.g., the seizure of power by young officers in Egypt in 1952 and the anti-imperialism of the Ethiopian military; Torres' regime in Bolivia and Velasco's in Peru. Subsequent study has revealed that such 'turns to the Left' were in fact illusory. It may sometimes prove a wiser strategy for the military to seduce the Left than to repress it. Velasco's 'socialism' has been shown to be sheer rhetoric.¹² The new military junta in Ethiopia, despite its aura of anti-imperialism, is decimating left-wing groups with American arms. Kaldor notes that in Egypt, industrialization advanced 'at the expense of the poorest classes in society, based on the consumption pattern of the elite'. No doubt the small Egyptian industrial bourgeoisie took umbrage when its property was nationalized (and its property was only nationalized after it repeatedly failed to shake-off its inertia and respond to the liberal investment incentives proffered to it by the young officers).¹³ State managers, large landowners, and the mercantile bourgeoisie, however, continued to prosper. Since Nasser's death, and an investment climate made sweeter by the interlude of state enterprise, private capital is back in the saddle.

The military (or part of it, within or across ranks) may of course be genuinely more anti-imperialist or more socialist than the ruling class by dint of their low pay and miserable conditions, sensitivity to the sufferings and animosity of people around them, origins, or attendance at evening classes. And Kaldor argues, 'if the military are not an exact replica of the social formation, then the conditions of military takeover become very significant'. This is indeed true if army takeovers fan the flames

of revolution, as in Portugal. For once rebellions within the army trigger off revolts among the peasants and proletarians, the masses are momentarily spared the bloodshed of armed struggle in their fight for socialism. But surely this is all. For an army of socialists cannot bequeath socialism to the masses. Since the landed aristocracy and the industrial bourgeoisie do not perish on the morrow of a coup d'état, their property and power must be wrested from them at the base. Thus writes Rene Zavaleta in a post-mortem on the defeat of General Torres in Bolivia:

What [the] August [uprising] showed was that in making a revolution nothing is handed to one on a plate. The only power that can be relied on is that which has been won with one's own hands . . . the army cannot carry through a popular revolution.¹⁴

When the Tsarist Army disintegrated under conditions of economic collapse and revolutionary propaganda, it made way for the Russian Revolution, it did not make it. Indeed, it presented 'an exact replica of the social formation'.

Kaldor argues for a new approach to explain 'the differences in the behaviour of military institutions in Third World countries'. While no one interested in such countries would deny the need for further study, the similarities in military takeovers are in fact as compelling as their differences. Concerning no fewer than 14 interventions in Africa between December 1962 and February 1966, Roger Murray writes:

If we examine these interventions, what is striking is that . . . despite their original conjunctural variations or their technical and procedural differences . . . they converge towards an attempt to stabilize the situation for overseas capital and, in Nigeria, Congo-Leopoldville and Ghana, for national capital also. . . . The sense of the emphasis on 'economic development' is quite clear.

Murray, however, offers the following caveat:

[the] fundamental and apparently unquestioned commitment of the military/police/civil service elements to a 'non-socialist path of development' does not mean that there will not be certain collisions between the military leaderships and Western interests over the adjudication of spheres of profits between overseas and local capital.¹⁵

Significantly, Murray includes the civil service in the triumvirate of institutions hindering socialist development. For the 'radicalization' of the civil service (one of the 'ubiquitous organs' of the centralized state) may be as necessary for the achievement of socialism as the 'radicalization' of the military.

II

Kaldor's study of the effects which arms expenditures and the weapons system have on the civilian sector of Third World economies ends in the following generalizations:

... there appears to be a strong association between high military spending, high rates of industrial growth, and foreign dependence. The mode of industrial growth, whether based on free enterprise or planning, seems to vary. [Does she mean by this that cross-country differences in the degree of planning have no influence on the association? How are differences in planning measured?] I have tried to suggest that this association can be explained in terms of imported military technology, which imposes a common pattern on Third World military institutions, a pattern which reflects the social structure of metropolitan countries as much as indigenous society. The arms are used to extract resources to finance industrial growth, either directly through war or repression, or indirectly as an ideological symbol of nationhood or whatever. The operation of the armed forces, particularly the repair and maintenance of arms, at the same time provides a direct stimulus to industry. Finally, the political willingness to carry out this role, whether in or out of government, stems from certain organizational characteristics imposed by certain kinds of imported military technology, namely, the weapons system. The pattern is repeated on a world-wide scale. Expenditures on arms and dependence resulting from the, perhaps implicit, use of force or from the ideology of modern arms provides the mechanism for channelling resources from the periphery to the metropolis.

Kaldor's conclusion of a 'strong association between high military spending, high rates of industrial growth, and foreign dependence' in some countries is based largely on Professor Emile Benoit's findings (published in 1973) and on her own interpretation of data provided by the US Arms Control and Disarmament Agency (ACDA). Yet Benoit's findings are vexed by such serious statistical problems that it is hard to see how Kaldor reaches the conclusions that we cited above. In a simple regression of the rate of change of civilian spending and military burden (i.e., share of GNP devoted to defence, presumably defined narrowly), Benoit finds a 'strong' (?) positive correlation of 0.55 (t statistic = 4.2). Aware that such a correlation may be spurious due to omitted variables, Benoit regresses the rate of change of civilian spending on military burden, investment rates and bilateral aid. For this equation, covering the period 1950–65, the military burden contributes only 1.76% to the variation in civilian spending and is *not* statistically significant.

(Kaldor fails to report this particular finding.) Only for the period 1960–65 does the military burden make a significant contribution. Benoit then writes:

In deciding to put primary reliance on our [1950–65] results ... we were glad to find ourselves in agreement with Professor Robert Dorfman. ...

However Professor Dorfman supposed that if one dismissed the [1960–65] results and accepted the [1950–65] results, one would have to conclude that the defence burden has a negligible effect on the growth of the civilian economy. On this point, we were unable to follow him.

Our scepticism with respect to this conclusion derives from complications introduced into the interpretation of the results by the considerable degree of intercorrelation of the variables. ...¹⁶

Benoit then proceeds to argue that, like a lotus blossom in the mud, there may exist in the mire of multicollinearity a strong correlation between military outlays and changes in civilian spending. The argument is unconvincing. Multicollinearity weakens rather than strengthens confidence in a relationship (which may, however, still merit further study if theory so dictates).

Kaldor's admittedly 'crude examination' of the ACDA data leads her 'to pick out groups of countries representing extreme situations'. There are countries with high rates of growth and high rates of growth of military spending; a low growth, low spending group; and one experiencing the worst of both worlds. Given this diversity, it is even more incomprehensible how Kaldor arrives at her conclusion of a 'strong association' between industrialization and arms expenditures (the ACDA data she presents in Table 1 in fact contain figures on rates of growth of GNP *per capita* rather than on rates of industrial growth). Certainly the most elementary statistical analysis of the data for all countries in Table 1 on military burden (1972) and rates of growth of GNP *per capita* (average for 1963–73) does not reveal any positive association between the two variables, strong or otherwise. The simple correlation coefficient is -0.18 for a sample of 40 underdeveloped countries.¹⁷

It is noteworthy that an exhaustive statistical study of the economic performance of military regimes in Third World countries published shortly after Kaldor's article found that '... in aggregate military regimes do not perform significantly differently from civilian regimes'.¹⁸ Although military regimes perform 'slightly better' than their predecessor civilian regimes, this association, according to the

authors, '... is not sufficiently strong to support the image of the military as a major force for economic development ... it is equally clear that the simple equation of the military regime with an obstacle to development is quite erroneous'. In other words, to understand economic development, it is necessary to penetrate beneath the political superstructure.

Kaldor is well aware that the complex inter-connections between economic development and armaments systems and expenditures do not easily lend themselves to statistical analysis. Yet in her qualitative pursuit of such interconnections, she appears to lose sight of the size of the arms economy and, therefore, exaggerates how great a positive impact it might reasonably be expected to have on the civilian economy. For in fact, the share of GNP devoted to defence in most Third World countries not engaged in shooting wars is quite small (although not nearly small enough, and rising). Consequently, it may be wagging the dog by the tail to imagine that the complexion of the industrialization process takes on a new coloration in the presence of an arms economy. According to figures which Kaldor herself cites, the average military burden for Africa in 1972 was only 2.8% of GNP. The figures for Latin America, South Asia and East Asia (including North and South Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos) were 1.8%, 3.8%, and 4% respectively. For the Near East defence expenditures averaged 11.9% of GNP. Clearly the negative effects of the military burden, however small its size, are very great. Armaments are used for repression and they are a drain on resources, as Kaldor points out. Evidence she cites indicates that the average ratio of military to health and education spending in 23 underdeveloped countries in 1972 was 2.2. A doubling of social expenditures might be expected eventually to reshape every farm and factory. But even if military expenditures doubled, what are the growth-inducing linkages which connect an imported weapons system and the civilian sector?

Kaldor appears to accord the same importance to the arms economy in Third World countries as is accorded to the arms economy in advanced countries. She does not specify whether she is referring to advanced or backward countries when she writes:

Marx talked about [the military's] absorption of surplus population and the expenditure of food and liquor. Rosa Luxembourg pointed out the importance of arms expenditure as a method of realizing surplus value. But it is only with the rise of the permanent arms race that the allocative

function of the military assumed such predominance, and it is primarily since World War II that Marxist arms economy theses, purporting to explain the survival of capitalism, have spread.

The effect of the arms economy on the *survival* of capitalism in advanced countries, however, cannot be equated with the effect of the arms economy on the *rise* of capitalism in backward countries.

Historically, the army has acted as a crucible of economic progress insofar as innovations conceived within the military have diffused to the civilian sector. Marx was quite aware of this. His letter to Engels dated 1857 reads as follows:

... Your 'Army' (Reference to Engels' article 'Army', printed in the *New American Cyclopaedia*,

Ed.) is very well done; only its size made me feel as if I had been hit over the head, for it must do you a lot of harm to work so much. ... The history of the *army* brings out more clearly than anything else the correctness of our conception of the connection between the productive forces and social relations. In general, the army is important for economic development. For instance, it was in the army that the ancients first fully developed a wage system. Similarly among the Romans the *peculium castrense* (Camp property - Ed.) was the first legal form in which the right of other than fathers of families to moveable property was recognized. So also the guild system among the corporation of *fabri*. (Artisans attached to the army. - Ed.) Here too the first use of machinery on a large scale. Even the special value of metals and their use as money appears to have been originally based - as soon as Grimm's stone age was passed - on their military significance. The division of labour *within* one branch was also first carried out in the armies. The whole history of the forms of bourgeois society is very strikingly epitomized here.¹⁹

Nevertheless, the significance of the weapons system in Third World countries today is obviously not technological diffusion. Even if armies invented the wheel long ago, the modernization of transportation in Third World countries could not now be ascribed to militarism. Generally the *latest* technological marvels of the military neither materialize in Third World arsenals nor are utilizable by nearby factories because of their extraordinary sophistication, as Kaldor intimates. What then is the significance of the weapons system in Third World countries? According to Kaldor:

As in the metropolis, the true significance of the weapons system concept is political; it creates a *commitment to industrialization* and, more particularly, to a model of industrialization that is decadent by the standard of the most advanced industrial societies. The primary function of the

industrial [modern] army is not so much combat as political intervention. It is through the military coup that the army preserves the system. The major weapons may have *prestige significance* and they may be used in external war and, on occasion, domestically. (Tanks and aircraft have proved effective as instruments of terror.) But, first and foremost, they *orientate the soldier toward a particular political tendency*. (My emphasis.)

How 'a commitment to industrialization', 'prestige significance', and the orientation of the soldier 'toward a particular political tendency' can accomplish the growth of capitalist industries, decadent or otherwise, the transformation of agriculture, and the modernization of handicrafts, is left unclear.

Kaldor does mention the role of repression in furthering economic development, although she notes that when direct repression is necessary, the deployment of advanced weaponry is not: '[states] revert to the methods of the pre-industrial armies, or to the use of simple "intermediate technology" weapons . . . ' Whatever the implements used, however, it could be argued that strong military government increases repression, and hence exploitation and production, by increasing absolute surplus value: lengthening the workday and intensifying the labour process. On the other hand, the *specifica differentia* of capitalism is production based on relative surplus value: higher productivity through technological innovation rather than greater effort. Whether or not military dictatorship enhances development will then depend on how repression affects *both* relative and absolute surplus value. Terrorism and armed might may not be conducive to thoroughgoing technological transformation.

It should be noted that in the Marxist conception, 'development' carries a very broad meaning. (Kaldor notes that different schools of economists attach different meanings to the term.) The Marxist definition includes not only advances in the means of production but also an end to all class differences and the flowering of culture and the human potential to their fullest. By these criteria, military dictatorship is always anathema to development.

Undoubtedly foreign aid, either in the form of loans or grants, has affected the magnitude of the military burden in Third World countries. Such aid is mentioned in passing by Kaldor. It is not, however, given the attention it deserves in light of her conclusion that 'expenditures on arms . . . provide the mechanism for channelling resources from the periphery to the metropolis'. For the larger the proportion of Third World arms expenditures financed by

outright grants, the smaller the direct transfer of surplus from the 'periphery' to the 'centre' and the greater the redistribution of income within the advanced countries. Moreover, if expenditures on arms imports are productive and give rise to greater industrialization than would otherwise be the case, there are grounds for arguing that such expenditures do not involve *any* direct transfer of surplus from the 'periphery' to the 'centre'. This is a subject which deserves to be put high up on Kaldor's list of topics for further research.

III

The essential lessons to be learned from Engels' 'Force theory' are two-fold. First, an understanding of the military in development presupposes an understanding of the relations and forces of production both preceding and succeeding a coup d'état. 'Political relations indubitably influence the economic movement', Plekhanov writes in a study on the methodology of dialectical materialism, which makes frequent reference to Engels' *Anti-Duhring*, 'but it is also indisputable that before they influence that movement they are created by it'.²⁰ To assess how strong-arm states address economic problems, it is necessary to know the nature of the manifold economic problems which brought them to power. Second, insofar as class forces determine economic change, an understanding of the influence of armies on economic change presupposes an understanding of the reaction of armies on class forces. In any study of the military in development, one would hope to answer a set of questions such as the following: Does the formal assumption of state power by the military strengthen or frustrate the bourgeoisie in its efforts to destroy or co-opt the parasitical landlord class in order to modernize agriculture? Are the outcomes of collisions between foreign and local capital generally more or less favourable to the latter under military dictatorship? In cases such as Zambia, where the state offers too little to the middle class to earn its affection, but gives too little to the masses to win their support, will the closer integration of civilian and military functions (which appears underway) alter the pace or path of economic change? The posing of such questions draws attention to the independent effects which local ruling classes exert on development. The questions which Kaldor addresses, by contrast,

are oriented towards the derived dynamics of imported armaments systems.

According to Engels, when the internal public force of a country stands in opposition to economic development, 'as at a certain stage has occurred with almost every political power in the past', the contest has always ended with the downfall of the political power. This raises the issue of the durability of military regimes in Third World countries, which only specialized studies of specific countries can intelligently resolve. Suffice it to say here that the Marxist conception of history would lead to the anticipation that those economic strategies of military juntas which might best suit the growth of private enterprise (foreign and local) in the short term might least suit the mobilization of popular support, while in the long term, the achievements of economic growth would always be rechallenged by a strengthened working class movement with a heightened class consciousness. It is this contradiction, in one of

its manifestations, which underlies Roger Murray's concluding prognostications (made in 1966) of the future of the military in Africa.

... the military 'rulers' are of course involved in a profound contradiction. If they take seriously their commitment to 'austerity' and retrenchment, they will inevitably attenuate their possible social and institutional supports. If they do not, economic and social tensions will merely worsen. ... The truth is that while the military may initially benefit from popular exhaustion and tacit or active support for the dismantling of sclerotic political institutions, it is unlikely to find a stable social-institutional base for its rule. If military groupings try in these circumstances to preempt political life for any length of time, it is safe to predict the classic trajectory of internal degradation - coup, counter-coup, assassination. ... Multiplication of intrigues and contacts will occur and a shifting kaleidoscopic round of military-civilian coalitions will preoccupy journalists and apparently constitute 'politics', until the whole system is contested by a disciplined revolutionary movement.²

NOTES

1. Kaldor distinguishes between two sets of Marxists: 'The one ... would view institutions as replicas of the social formation, or mode of production, and would confine the analysis to structural changes in society. The other would view institutions as the historical product of social conditions always one step ahead or one step behind the current social structure and therefore behaving in a relatively autonomous fashion'. Given the writings of Marx and Engels, it is hard to see on what grounds Kaldor draws such a distinction. What Marxist would not see institutions as historical products, one step ahead or behind the social structure, so long as one recognized that institutions were fundamentally the replicas of the social formation?

2. This passage and the five which follow are from Frederick Engels, *Anti-Duhring* (New York: International Publishers, 1939), pp. 179-180; p. 182; p. 183; pp. 198-199; pp. 202-203.

3. Frederick Engels, *The Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State* (New York: International Publishers, 1942), pp. 156-157.

4. Karl Marx and Frederick Engels - *Selected Correspondence* (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1956), p. 214.

5. Karl Marx, *The Civil War in France* (Peking: Foreign Languages Press, 1966), p. 64.

6. Stanley Payne, *Politics and the Military in Modern Spain* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1967).

7. Jean Monds, 'Syndicalism and revolution in Spain: the workers' commissions', *Radical America* (March-April 1975).

8. Engels, *Anti-Duhring*, p. 184.

9. This passage is from *Origins of the Family, Private Property and the State*.

10. This passage and the preceding one from Engels, *Anti-Duhring*, pp. 185 and 189. See Nathan Rosenberg, 'Marx as a student of technology' for a critique of the view that Marx was a technological determinist. (*Monthly Review*, Vol. 28, No. 3 (July-August 1976).)

11. George W. Ball, *The Discipline of Power*, as cited by Ruth First, *Power in Africa* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1970), p. 1.

12. See, for example, Anibal Quijano, *Nationalism and Capitalism in Peru: A Study in Neo-imperialism* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1971).

13. Anour Abdel Malek, *Egypt: Military Society, the Army Regime, the Left and Social Change Under Nasser* (New York: Vintage Books, 1968). Kaldor also bases her analysis of Egypt on this study.

14. Rene Zavaleta, 'Bolivia – military nationalism and the popular assembly', *New Left Review* (May–June 1972).
15. Roger Murray, 'Militarism in Africa', *New Left Review* (July–August 1966).
16. Emile Benoit, *Defense and Economic Growth in Developing Countries* (Lexington, Mass.: Lexington Books, 1973), p. 77.
17. When South and North Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia are omitted from the estimation, the simple correlation coefficient equals 0.03. When the Middle Eastern countries are also omitted, the coefficient equals –0.09.
18. R. D. McKinley and A. S. Cohen, 'The economic performance of military regimes: a cross-national aggregate study', *British Journal of Political Science* (July 1976).
19. *Karl Marx and Frederick Engels – Selected Correspondence*, p. 118.
20. George V. Plekhanov, *Fundamental Problems of Marxism* (New York: International Publishers, 1969), p. 65.
21. Roger Murray, 'Militarism in Africa'.